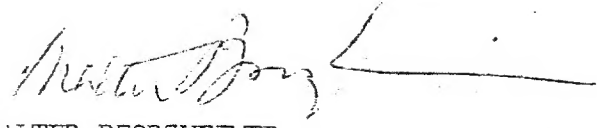


13 May 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : President Polk on Secrecy of Intelligence and Intelligence Funds

I recently showed Harold Brownman the attached quotation from President Polk's Message to the House of Representatives in the Daniel Webster case. I believe it to be the only Message on Executive Privilege having to do solely with intelligence matters. The case involved the use of the special statutory "foreign intercourse" funds which were at the President's disposal for special use on his signature to a confidential voucher only, much as in our present unvouchered funds. The Congressional charge was that Secretary of State Webster had misused those funds (for which he had delegated power from President Tyler). In the course of the House Foreign Affairs Committee investigation of the matter (by which time Webster was a senator), President Polk denied the Committee access to the vouchers. However, he qualified his refusal to the extent that if a misuse had occurred, he would turn over all the necessary material. Mr. Brownman thought this quotation might be of interest to you at the present time in view of the desire of certain senators to make the CIA budget public.


WALTER PFORZHEIMER
Curator
Historical Intelligence Collection

Att *hu*

ILLEGIB

"The experience of every nation on earth has demonstrated that emergencies may arise in which it becomes absolutely necessary for the public safety or the public good to make expenditure; the very object of which would be defeated by publicity. Some governments have very large amounts at their disposal, and have made vastly greater expenditures than the small amounts which have from time to time been accounted for on President's certificates. In no nation is the application of such sums ever made public. In time of war or impending danger the situation of the country may make it necessary to employ individuals for the purpose of obtaining information or rendering other important services who could never be prevailed upon to act if they entertained the least apprehension that their names or their agency would in any contingency be divulged. So it may often become necessary to incur an expenditure for an object highly useful to the country; for example, the conclusion of a treaty with a barbarian power whose customs require on such occasions the use of presents. But this object might be altogether defeated by the intrigues of other powers if our purposes were to be made known by the exhibition of the original papers and vouchers to the accounting officers of the Treasury. It would be easy to specify other cases which may occur in the history of a great nation, in its intercourse with other nations, wherein it might become absolutely necessary to incur expenditures for objects which could never be accomplished if it were suspected in advance that the items of expenditure and the agencies employed would be made public."

(Message from President James K. Polk to the House of Representatives, 20 April 1846. In: Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897, Vol. IV at page 435.)

*Appropriation
S. Repts &
Statements*

TO:		ACTION	INFO.			ACT ON	INFO.
1	DCI			11	LC		✓
2	DDCI			12	IG		
3	S/MC		✓	13	Compt		✓
4	DDS&T			14	Asst/DCI		✓
5	DDI			15	AO/DCI		
6	DDM&S			16	Ex/Sec		
7	DDO			17			
8	D/DCI/IC		✓	18			
9	D/DCI/NIO		✓	19			
10	GC		✓	20			

SUSPENSE

Date

Remarks:

DCI/DDCI

6/24/74